

Budget 2010 response for Daily Echo comment round-up -

By Jimmy Chestnutt, Director General of Southampton & Fareham Chamber

There was some good news for business even if we will have to wait until after the general election to make serious inroads into the borrowing black hole.

A huge issue in the recession has been the lack of credit available to businesses, so we welcome the new £94 billion lending targets that should make more funding available from tax-payer supported banks.

The Chancellor has also heeded the call from various industry sectors to increase the number of government contracts that go to small and medium-sized firms.

On tax, we are concerned that he has not cancelled the 1% hike in employer National Insurance contributions despite considerable opposition. However it is good to see that business rates are to be cut and investment allowances and capital gains tax relief are to rise.

It's a moot point as to whether there is enough here to sustain overall investment in our transport, digital and energy networks, all of which are essential planks of future growth.